Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1 - 15 (cancelled)

- 16. (new) A process for developing an exposed heat-sensitive printing plate precursor, comprising:
 - (a) producing an alkaline developer by
 - (i) dissolving such an amount of an alkali component selected from alkali silicates, alkali hydroxides, Na₃PO₄, and K₃PO₄ and mixtures thereof in water that a pH of more than 12 is obtained,
 - (ii) dissolving a stabilizer selected from M₂CO₃, MHCO₃, or a mixture of 2 or more thereof, wherein each M is independently selected from Li, Na, K and NR'₄ and each R' independently represents H or C₁-C₄ alkyl, in the solution obtained in step (i), wherein the amount of added stabilizer is such that the amount of the added carbonate anion is 1.5 to 20 wt%, based on the total weight of the developer composition, and
 - (iii) optionally dissolving at least one additive selected from glycols; amphoteric, non-ionic and cationic surfactants; anti-foaming agents; biocides; complexing agents and organic solvents either before or after the dissolution of the stabilizer in step (ii).
 - (b) contacting an exposed heat-sensitive printing plate precursor with the developer composition obtained in step (a), and
 - (c) rinsing with water.
- 17. (new) Process according to claim 16, wherein the added stabilizer is Na₂CO₃.
- 18. (new) Process according to claim 16 wherein the stabilizer is added in such an amount that the amount of the added carbonate anion is 2.5 to 12 wt%.

- 19. (new) Process according to claim 16 wherein the alkaline component comprises an alkali silicate.
- 20. (new) Process according to claim 16 wherein the pH value of the solution obtained in step (i) is in the range of from 13 to 14.
- 21. (new) Process according to claim 16 wherein the radiation-sensitive coating of the printing plate precursor comprises a phenolic resin.
- 22. (new) A process for developing an exposed heat-sensitive printing plate precursor, comprising
 - (a) contacting the exposed heat-sensitive printing plate precursor with an alkaline developer, and
 - (b) rinsing with water, wherein the alkaline developer has been prepared by:
 - (i) dissolving such an amount of an alkali component selected from alkali silicates, alkali hydroxides, Na₃PO₄, and K₃PO₄ and mixtures thereof in water that a pH of more than 12 is obtained,
 - (ii) dissolving a stabilizer selected from M₂CO₃, MHCO₃, or a mixture of 2 or more thereof, wherein each M is independently selected from Li, Na, K and NR'₄ and each R' independently represents H or C₁-C₄ alkyl, in the solution obtained in step (i), wherein the amount of added stabilizer is such that the amount of the added carbonate anion is 1.5 to 20 wt%, based on the total weight of the developer composition, and
 - (iii) optionally dissolving at least one additive selected from glycols; amphoteric, non-ionic and cationic surfactants; anti-foaming agents; biocides; complexing agents and organic solvents either before or after the dissolution of the stabilizer in step (ii).